

January 16, 1951.

Dear Kim-

Your plan for a theoretical paper in Am. Nat. sounds very sensible and I look forward to reading it. I hope that I'm not being too obstinate, however, in suggesting that the discussion on p. 11 (?) of your PNAS paper, concerning the problems of prototrophs under mutation pressure is too one-sided, and would better be transposed to the fuller account in your prospective paper. Don't you think that the same qualifications apply to the 10^{-42} equilibrium calculated probability of a prototroph as those summarized in your letter's first paragraph?

As to the currents in BW, I think that actually it would not be too bad, from everyone's point of view, if you could arrange an assignment to one of the Service Biological Laboratories. Krueger talked as if he would be able to pull a wanted registrant into his outfit, and I assume that the Dietrick crowd could do the same. Both labs spend a very large part of their time on bacterial population problems (e.g. Werner Braun's stuff) albeit on pathogens, and I am sure that they could use at least one intelligent recruit. Krueger left me the impression that the only way to make an assignment under circumstances like your own would be under orders, i.e., that this would not be a way to retain civilian status. Whether the Army would be willing to release a licensed physician to duty with lower priority than giving physicals to recruits is hard to say, but it wouldn't hurt to try it if your orders are as imminent as you have indicated. There is always a certain amount of fuss in getting security clearance, so the longer the time margin the better. If you are hard-pressed, I would certainly recommend that you write to Braun, and lay your cards on the table. They certainly can't fail to be impressed with this recent stuff of yours, so a brief account of it might be in order. I've been assuming that you knew Braun directly. If this is not so, would you want me to write him a brief note too? It happens that he is the review officer on a research contract we have with them, which provides a formal channel, along which it would not be at all inappropriate to mention personnel possibilities. Werner himself has, of course, little or no military status but I think affords the best channel of communication with the military organization of BW.

I think you're right about lethals in coli, and the reduplication certainly is there as many nuclei. But I should pick more up at low survival levels unless the same events which lead to lethal mutations also result in the cytoplasmic or other superimposed effects.

Sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg